



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES & PUBLIC PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

March 3, 2022
Public Safety Committee Testimony

Good morning Senator Osten, Representative Horn and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on some of the proposed legislation before you today. I offer my assistance, if needed, should these proposals move forward, always keeping in mind costs and efficient agency operations.

S.B. 159-AN ACT CONCERNING FIREWORK PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY

This bill is a proposal put forward by the Department. We are in full support of this legislation. This bill would require applicants for a certificate of competency to be fingerprinted and undergo a state and national criminal history records check and allow the Commissioner or a local fire marshal to suspend a firework permit for violation of a statute, regulation or ordinance relating to fireworks.

S.B. 161-AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROHIBITION AGAINST HIRING POLICE OFFICERS DISMISSED FOR MALFEASANCE OR WHO RESIGNED OR RETIRED WHILE UNDER INVESTIGATION

This bill is a proposal put forward by the Department as recommended by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. We are in full support of this legislation. It is vital that we hold our law enforcement to the highest standards and this bill would give the Police Officer Standards and Training Council the ability to enforce the prohibition on employment of police officers who have been terminated, resigned, or retired while under investigation for malfeasance or serious misconduct, by denying or withholding certification. The proposal also includes due process for police officers to review and remove said prohibition.

S.B. 162-AN ACT CONCERNING FEES CHARGED BY INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS THAT PROCESS CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS CHECKS

This bill is a proposal put forward by the Department. We are in full support of this legislation. The bill would eliminate the requirement that an independent contractor, operating under an agreement with the Commissioner to process criminal history records checks, collect and remit the fingerprinting fee that would otherwise apply to the criminal history records check and to increase the maximum convenience fee that the contractor may charge. This proposal will not eliminate the ability of the State Police to electronically submit fingerprints but will augment and enable more fingerprints to be submitted electronically, which will accelerate the turnaround time for results and improve efficiency.

S.B. 217-AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HATE CRIMES INVESTIGATIVE UNIT WITHIN THE DIVISION OF STATE POLICE AND REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT OF A REPORTING SYSTEM, BEST PRACTICES AND A MODEL INVESTIGATION POLICY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT UNITS REGARDING HATE CRIMES

The Department fully supports the proposed legislation. This bill would create a Hate Crimes Investigative Unit within the State Police and establish its duties, require development of a reporting system, best practices and a model investigation policy for law enforcement units regarding hate crimes, establish time requirements for law enforcement units to report hate crimes to the Hate Crimes Investigative Unit, and designate the head of the unit as a member of the State-Wide Hate Crimes Advisory Council. The Division of State Police recently established a Hate Crime Unit and this legislation will greatly enhance the unit and its functions.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on these pieces of legislation.